

Message Text

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EXDIS, FOR AMB. YOUNG FROM UNA

FOLLOWING REPEAT JIDDA 6535 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO
BEIRUT, DAMASCUS, LONDON, PARIS AND TEL AVIV SEP 12.

QUOTE: S E C R E T JIDDA 6535

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, SA
SUBJECT: SAUDI POSITION ON LEBANON

1. NOTE VERBALE OUTLINING SAG POSITION ON LEBANON WAS HANDED
POL COUN ON SEPTEMBER 10 BY DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS ABD AL-RAHMAN MANSOURI. EMBASSY TRANSLATION FOLLOWS.

2. BEGIN TEXT. SAUDI ARABIA SHARES THE CONCERN OF THE UNITED
STATES FOR DEVELOPMENTS IN LEBANON AND ITS ANXIETY OVER
CLASHES BETWEEN THE SYRIAN TROOPS AND MARONITE MILITIAS IN
THE NORTHERN PART OF MOUNT LEBANON.

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3. MOVED BY THIS CONCERN, THE KINGDOM HAS EXERTED EFFORTS
WITH SYRIAN OFFICIALS FOR PACIFICATION, AND THEY HAVE
RESPONDED POSITIVELY BY PLEDGING NOT TO BE FIRST IN ANY
ACTION AGAINST THE MARONITE MILITIAS, THOUGH THEY RETAINED
THEIR TROOP'S RIGHT FOR SELF-DEFENSE AGAINST THE MILITIAS'
ONSLAUGHT. SYRIAN OFFICIALS HAVE ALSO ASKED THE KINGDOM TO OFFER
ITS GOOD OFFICES WITH THE UNITED STATES FOR COUNSELLING THE

MARONITE MILITIAS TO REMAIN QUIET ON THEIR PART, AND NOT TO PROVOKE THE SYRIAN TROOPS FOR COUNTER-ACTION.

4. HENCE THE KINGDOM'S MOVE TO INVOLVE THE UNITED STATES IN MAKING EFFORTS WITH THE MARONITE MILITIAS FOR PRESERVING CALM AND AVOIDING PROVOCATIONS, ON ONE HAND, AND IN MAKING EFFORTS WITH ISRAEL ON THE OTHER TO REMAIN QUIET AND NOT TO ENCOURAGE THE MILITIAS BY PROVIDING THEM WITH MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND WEAPONS.

5. INSPIRED BY THIS CONCERN, THE KINGDOM HAS ALSO ADOPTED POSITIONS ON THE RENEWAL OF THE ARAB DIETERRENT FORCE'S MANDATES IN HARMONY WITH THE INTEREST OF LEBANON AND WITH THE INTEREST OF CONSOLIDATION OF THE LAWFUL AUTHORITY IN LEBANON. THOSE TWO CONSIDERATIONS SHALL CONTINUE TO GOVERN THE KINGDOM'S STANDS IN THIS REGARD.

6. ON THE ARAB WORLD LEVEL, THE KINGDOM HAS MADE EFFORTS INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE ARAB LEAGUE FOR THE RESTORATION OF PEACE AND STABILITY IN LEBANON AND SHALL WORK TO THIS END AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY. PERHAPS THE ARAB FOREIGN MINISTER'S MEETING AT NEW YORK DURING THE U.S. GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S SESSION WILL OFFER AN OPPORTUNITY FOR FURTHER EFFORTS.

7. SAUDI ARABIA BELIEVES THAT ADDITIONAL U.S. EFFORTS WITH THE MARONITE MILITIAS AND WITH ISRAEL FOR ACHIEVING
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THE SAME END IS DESIRABLE SO THAT EFFORTS MAY BE DIRECTED TO ALL ELEMENTS IN THE ISSUE, PARTICULARLY THE ILLEGITIMATE ONES.

8. SAUDI ARABIA WOULD LIKE TO POINT OUT THAT ITS EFFORTS VIS-A-VIS THE CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS IN LEBANON ARE DIRECTED AT CONSOLIDATION OF THE LEGITIMATE AUTHORITY IN THE ABSENCE OF WHICH NO PEACE OR STABILITY CAN PREVAIL IN LEBANON. LIKEWISE, THE KINGDOM'S CRITERION FOR THE SOUNDNESS OR UNSOUNDNESS OF THE SYRIAN TROOPS' STANCES IS BASED ON THE EXTENT OF THOSE TROOPS' SUPPORT FOR THE LEGITIMATE POWER IN LEBANON, AND ON THEIR DEALING AND COOPERATION WITH THAT AUTHORITY, A CONDITION WHICH THE OFFICIALS OF THE LEBANESE LEGITIMATE AUTHORITY HAVE ASSURED THE KINGDOM EXISTS IN FACT.

9. THIS SAUDI VIEW OF THE ACTIONS OF THE SYRIAN TROOPS STEMS FROM THE CONSIDERATION BY THE KINGDOM THAT THESE TROOPS ARE PART OF THE ARAB SECURITY FORCES WHOSE LEGITIMATE TASK IS DERIVED FROM THE ARAB LEAGUE RESOLUTION WHICH WAS TAKEN AT THE REQUEST OF THE LEBANESE LEGITIMATE AUTHORITY TO UNDERTAKE THE LAWFUL TASK OF ENDING THE

CIVIL STRIFE, SOMETHING WHICH NECESSITIATES SHORING UP
THE LEGITIMATE POWER IN LEBANON.

10. THUS, THE KINGDOM BELIEVES THAT ALL GOOD OFFICES
MUST BE CONCENTRATED WITH ALL EMEMENTS CONCERNED
TOWARD BEEFING UP THE LEGITIMATE AUTHORITY IN LEBANON,
CONDITIONS IN LEBANON HAVE DEVELOPED IN A MANNER
FAR FROM BEING A WAR BETWEEN MUSLIMS AND CHRISTIANS, OR A
DISPUTE BETWEEN MARONITES AND OTHER CHRISTIAN FACTIONS.
THE CONFLICT HAS DEVELOPED INHONETWEEN THE LEGITIMATE
LEBANESE AUTHORITY AND ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES. THUS THE ACTIONS
OF THE PHALANGISTS MILITIAS AND THEIR ALLIES CANNOT BE
VIEWED AS LAWFUL, AND THE PHALANGIST MILITIAS CANNOT
BE REGARDED AS REPRESENTING THE ENTIRE MARONITE SECT,
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OR THEIR ACTION IN THE INTEREST OF THE MARONITES. GENERALLY,
OTHERWISE HOW-UNDER SUCH CRITERIAN-COULD THESE
MILITIAS' TERRORIST OPERATION A ZAGHARTA AGAINST
FORMER PRESIDENT SULAIMAN FRANJIYAH AND HIS FAMILY, ALL
MARONITES, BE CONSTURED? ADDITIONALLY, IS NOT THE
LEGITIMATE AUTHORITY UNDER THE PRESENT PRESIDENT, SARKIS,
A MARONITE? AND SO TI BECOMES CLEAR THAT THE MILITIAS
CANNOT REPRESENT ALL THE CHRISTIANS ND CANNOT BE
REGARDED AS ALL THE MARONITES.

11. IT IS WORTH MENTIONING THAT IN THE CONTEXT OF
CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONS, THE
KINGDOM FEELS THROUGHT CONTACTS WITH SOME OFFICIALS OF
LEGITIMATE AUTHORITY IN LEBANON THAT THEY CANNOT CLEARLY
DISCERN THE UNITED STATES' POSITION VIS-A-VIS THE
LEGITIMATE LEBANESE AUTHORITY, SINCE THEY VIEW THE U.S. STANCE
AS ONE OF COMMUNICATING MESSAGES FROM THE MILITIAS AND
FROM ISRAEL WITHOUT ADOPTING AN INDEPENDENT CLEAR
ATTITUDE OR TAKING A POSITIVE ACTION ILLUSTRATING
SUCH A STANCE.

12. WHAT IS NOTICEABLE IN LEBANON'S DEVELOPMENTS IS THE
DEGREE OF ISRAEL'S READINESS TO INTERFERE IN MATTERS
WHICH HAVE NO CONNECTION WITH ITS SECURITY. IF EVENTS
IN SOUTHERN LEBANON ADJACENT TO ITS BORDERS MAY SERVE
AS A PRETEXT IN THIS REGARD, WHAT HAS ISRAEL TO DO WITH
EVENTS IN THE NORTHERN PARTS OF MOUNT LEBANON OR IN
BEIRUT UNLESS ITS GOAL IS SHEER AGGRESSION AND THE
PROMOTION OF INSTABILITY IN LEBANON AND IN THE ENTIRE
REGION IN GENERAL. END TEXT. WEST
UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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